Amendments to the claims

Claims 1-16 (Canceled)

17. (Original) A process for forming a multilayer composite insulator, comprising:

forming an insulator precursor by orienting an insulation insert in a desired location between a first facing layer and a layer of polymer based blanket material;

closing said insulator precursor in a molding press and crimping at least one selected area of said insulator precursor;

heating said insulator precursor in said molding press to a temperature sufficiently high to soften only said polymer binding fiber in said at least one selected area of said layer of polymer based blanket material; and

opening said molding press and removing said insulator wherein said insulator includes said at least one selected area characterized by relatively high density and relatively increased rigidity.

18. (Original) The process of Claim 17 further including cutting said first facing layer, said layer of polymer based blanket material and said insulation insert to desired dimensions prior to forming.

19. (Original) The process of Claim 17, wherein said heating of said insulator precursor is to between 200-400°F.

20. (Original) The process of Claim 17, wherein said heating of said insulator precursor is to between 300-375°F.

21. (Original) The process of Claim 17, including applying pressure to said insulator precursor in said molding press at a level between approximately 0.5-100.0 psi.

22. (Original) The process of Claim 21, wherein said pressure is applied for between substantially 5-45 seconds.

23. (Original) The process of Claim 21, including compressing said insulator precursor between approximately 10-95% when applying pressure.

24. (Original) The process of Claim 17, including orienting a second facing layer with said insulation insert, said first facing layer and said layer of polymer based blanket material when forming said insulator precursor.

34. (Previously Presented) A process for forming a multilayer composite insulator, comprising:

forming an insulator precursor by orienting an insulation insert in a desired location between a first facing layer and a layer of a polymer based blanket material including polymer binding fibers; and

molding said insulator precursor into a desired shape by;

heating said insulator precursor;

applying pressure to said insulator precursor;

softening only those polymer binding fibers present in at least one selected area of said polymer based blanket material; and

crimping said at least one selected area.